

REMARKS

In the present Amendment, the Abstract has been amended.

In the claims, independent claims 1 and 14 have been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 4 and 16, respectively. Claims 4 and 16 have been canceled, accordingly. In addition, claims 8 and 17 have been amended consistent with the amendments to independent claims 1 and 14.

No new matter has been added. Upon entry of the Amendment, which is respectfully requested, claims 1-3, 5-15, and 17-19 will be pending.

At page 2 of the Action, the Abstract of the Disclosure is objected to on the basis that the expression "means" should be avoided in the Abstract.

In response, the Abstract has been corrected by amendment. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider and withdraw the objection to the Abstract.

Also at page 2 of the Action, claims 8 and 17 are objected to. The Examiner states that the expressions "a fixing roller" and "a fixing belt" in these claims are unclear because there are previous recitations of a fixing roller and a fixing belt.

In response, Applicants have amended claims 8 and 17 to overcome the objection. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection are respectfully requested.

At page 3 of the Action, claims 1-3, 5, 7, 14 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Miyabayashi et al (5,138,390).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn because Miyabayashi et al '390 does not disclose or render obvious the cleaning process of the present invention. As noted

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. Appl. No. 10/696,361

above, independent claims 1 and 14 have, in the present Amendment, been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 4 and 16, respectively. Claims 4 and 16 were not subject to the present rejection.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

At page 4 of the Action, claims 1, 3 and 11-15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Sato (6,501,936) in view of Miyabayashi et al (5,138,390).

Applicants submit that this rejection should be withdrawn for the same reasons that the rejection of claims 1-3, 5, 7, 14 and 15 based on Miyabayashi et al '390 alone should be reconsidered and withdrawn. As noted, independent claims 1 and 14 have in the present Amendment been amended to incorporate the recitations of claims 4 and 16, respectively. Claims 4 and 16 were not subject to this rejection and, at page 5 of the Action, are indicated as being allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Allowance is respectfully requested.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

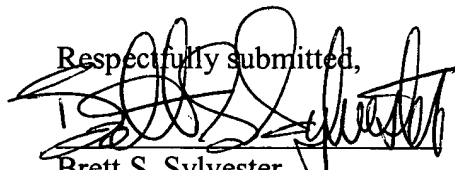
SUGHRUE MION, PLLC
Telephone: (202) 293-7060
Facsimile: (202) 293-7860

WASHINGTON OFFICE

23373

CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: September 27, 2005

Respectfully submitted,

Brett S. Sylvester
Registration No. 32,765